

COLLECTING ON MT. WASHINGTON.—Part II.

By ANNIE TRUMBULL SLOSSON.

Some years ago as I was going up the mountain by rail a young man connected with the Summit House spoke to me and said he hoped I could tell them up there the name of a red bug infesting the house. On my arrival I was told that there had been much complaint from guests because of the supposed presence of that unpleasant little creature, *Acanthia lectularia*. But the "red bug" proved to be that pretty little Chrysomelid, *Galerucella cavicollis*. It was there in great numbers, covering the windows, lighting on the walls, crawling on the floors. This season I saw very few of that species, but *Galerucella decora* seemed to have taken its place. I took scores of these, and they were brought to me daily by friends. The two "lady bugs," *Coccinella trifasciata* and *C. transversoguttata*, were also very common. The former, at least, breeds not far below the summit, for I found one specimen just emerging from the pupa skin which hung on one of the alpine sedges growing not two hundred feet below the top of the mountain. The larvæ can probably find plenty of food, as there are aphides even on the summit. Mr. Mann, in "Psyche," vol. i, p. 183, speaks of plant-lice which "infested the branches of birch trees," and "had produced an appearance like a snow-storm around the Summit House."

Flowers were scarce at the time of our first visit. The golden-rod was hardly in bloom, some of the earliest alpine flowers had gone by, and the little mountain sandwort, *Arenaria groenlandica*, was for some reason less plentiful than usual. But on the slope down into the alpine garden I found some golden-rod, a little Clintonia, goldthread, the white potentilla and a few other plants in bloom, and around these I took a few moths. *Anarta melanopa* and *A. schoenherri* were here, and also higher up among the rocks, a little brown and white tortricid, *Sciaphila moeschleriana* fluttered about, and I captured several; also two or three specimens of the geometrid, *Eupithecia cretaceata*. About these same blossoms, or on leaves, I caught several of the Lampyridæ, *Telephorus rotundicollis*, *Podabrus diadema*, *Lucidota atra*, *Elychnia corrusca*, *Cœnia dimidiata* and *Pyropyga decipiens*. Hymenoptera were scarce, though I saw three or four specimens of *Bombus pennsylvanica* and a few Parasitica. Of these last Mr.

G. C. Davis pronounces two or three "probably new," and others very rare. The absence of *Plusia vaccinia* about these flowers was surprising, as I had never failed in previous visits at this season to take at least a few. But I saw none at this time.

Argynnis myrina was very common, and specimens were brought me every day by willing, but inexperienced collectors in hopes of their proving to be *A. montinus*.

Water beetles of a few species were not uncommon in the little pools between the rocks near the summit and at the side of the carriage road. Here I found *Hydrophilus mixtus*, *Hydrobius fuscipes*, *Creniphilus subcupreus*, *Cymbiodyta fimbriata* and an *Agabus*, probably *confinis*. Some of these same species were also brought me by the trappists from the lake of the clouds, and the sphagnotic found crawling out from the sphagnum he gathered in that same water many specimens of a tiny *Hydroporus*, species yet unascertained. *Bidessus affinis* was very abundant everywhere. One species of *Hygrotrechus*, of the family popularly called water-boatmen or water-skaters, was also very plentiful in the pools and on the lake. It is a reddish form, probably *H. rufoscutellatus*. These little pools are also good hunting ground for other than aquatic insects. Beetles, bugs, ichneumons and small moths are blown from the sedges or rocks into the water, and I have taken many such, struggling on the surface or floating there lifeless.

Of course any one seen carrying a butterfly net or poison bottle about the rocky top of Mt. Washington meets many a scoff and jeer from the ordinary tourist—"Catching mosquitoes?" asks one, sarcastically; "going fishing," calls out another, while the more sober minded ones ask seriously if I really expect to find any insects in such an unlikely spot.

It is certainly wonderful how many forms of animal life exist in this bleak, barren, frigid region. At times the very air seems alive with minute insects, dancing like motes in the sunshine. You can scarcely turn over a single one of the stones which lie so strangely scattered over the whole cone or summit without finding under it many and various insects, beetles, larvæ, flies, mites, spiders and ants, some so minute as to be scarcely visible to the unassisted eye. The grass and sedge growing between the rocks are alive with small leaf-hoppers, at least one of these, taken on this visit, is a new species, so Mr. Van Duzee tells me,

a small Jassid. And there are always a great many flies, principally Muscidæ and Tachinidæ. I have never seen a day so cold or stormy that there were not some of these bluebottles buzzing about the rocks or bumping against the house or barns. Mr. C. H. T. Townsend, to whom I sent some of these, pronounces them "of great interest."

The red-legged grasshopper is plentiful, and I saw one of the red-winged (*H. tuberculatus*) also *C. viridifasciata*, and two or three species of *Tettix* and *Tettigidea*. I took only two dragonflies this time, both belonging to the Agrionina. These were flying in Alpine Garden. Others were seen, but not captured, around Lake of the Clouds. A *Chrysops* and two or three Phryganidæ were also found.

The stones themselves are resting places for flies and other insects, while several species of spiders crawl over them by hundreds. It is out of place in an entomological journal, I suppose, to say much of other forms of animal life, but I may just hint at such.

There are chipmunks here; one of them became very tame last Summer, and came daily to be fed, taking nuts or grain from those he knew or trusted. After his long Winter's sleep in that frozen clime he might well have been excused for forgetting his old acquaintances, but he remembered. And all this Summer he came again every day, accepting favors as gracefully as ever from his Summit benefactors. While I was there in July a woodchuck was shot by one of our party, on the side of the cone, quite near the hotel, and mice, shrews and moles are not uncommon, as daily visits to the wire traps, with which the mountain bristled during our stay proved. Snowbirds (*Junco*) fly about and dart in and out among the rocks just around the base. I made a great mistake I suppose in not examining the trapped and shot animals for parasites. I heard, but all too late, that mysterious little creatures were seen running from the bodies of these victims soon after their decease. These may have proved rare alpine forms of *Pulex*, *Pediculus*, *Melophagus* or *Sarcoptes*; perhaps even a new *Platyphilla*!

One must not be too fastidious in the choice of hunting grounds on the summit. One of our favorite insect mines there was the soft-soap barrel near the kitchen door. This sapanaceous bait proved very taking, and we captured there some of our rarest

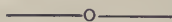
species. Here were found two or three specimens of *Scotodes americanum* Horn, a pair of *Tetropium cinnamopterum*, *Campylus denticornis*, and the dainty little Longicorn, *Pogonocherus penicellatus*; also flies, bees and ants. Even Medford's shaggy coat proved remunerative, and I took off it, as the grand old dog lay in the sunshine one warm noon, a fine specimen of *Chrysobothris trinervia* which flew and lighted there as I looked on. Several specimens of this Buprestid were taken on the summit. Dr. Packard, in his "Forest Insects," speaks of it as occurring in the pine forests of Colorado, and it is probable that it bores in pine trees, as do so many of its congeners. Some, perhaps many, of these wood-boring beetles found on the summit are brought up in the wood piled near the base for fuel. I have taken *Upis ceramboides*, *Iphthimus opacus* and *Scotobates calcaratus* on these logs in former years and have seen ants running in and out of holes and tunnels here. I searched faithfully for the larvæ or pupæ of the Agrotidæ peculiar to this fauna, but found but two of the latter under moss near rocks. These both were covered with a mould or fungoid growth and did not develop. One larva of *C. semidea* was taken on sedge (*Carex vulgaris* var. *hyperborea*). It was the green form and full grown. It fed well in confinement on its native food-plant while still on the mountain. When I brought it down to Franconia I gave it various species of *Carex* growing near, and it ate indiscriminately of each and all, thus showing a deplorable ignorance of botany, and one day it disgraced itself still more deeply by eating voraciously of blue grass (*Poa pratensis*) apparently quite unable to distinguish between Cyperaceæ and Graminaceæ. But after about three weeks of this varied fare it fell into a stupor and has slept ever since, alive but motionless, in its hybernation I suppose. I came down the mountain on the 14th, after a week's stay. On August 22d I again went up, hoping to find *Argynnis montinus*. I had been waiting at the Crawford House nearly a week for favorable weather. It had been cold and foggy, with much rain and wind all that time. The 22d was cold and bright, with a fair prospect of settled good weather. I had planned for only two days on the mountain this time. The forenoon of the 23d was bright and pleasant, though not very warm, and I did some fair collecting. Six specimens of *Argynnis montinus* were taken, but the week of storm had somewhat dimmed their beauty,

and some of them were quite shabby. In the Alpine Garden, near the head of Tuckerman's Ravine, the golden-rod was in fine bloom, and *Plusia vaccinii* was there in numbers; a few specimens of *Plusia simplex* came also to the flowers. *Vanessa milberti*, perfect, fresh specimens, looking as if just emerged from the chrysalis were flying here, and I took several.

I had seen, when on the mountain in July, under stones near the house, a large reddish mite. This was very common, and I could have taken a hundred. But I knew nothing of the Acarinae and had no correspondent interested in the family, but at this later visit, having a little vial of alcohol with me, I preserved one specimen; this Mr. Nathan Banks pronounces a new species. I also collected, running on the rocks, a Phalangid (daddy long-legs), which Mr. Banks writes me is new. Two spiders, *Clubiona canadensis* and *Pardosa brunnea*, were very common among the stones and moss; and *Eristalis tenax*, the ubiquitous drone-fly of the lower country was buzzing about among the flowers.

I found another larva of *Chionobas semidea*, the reddish form. But a better discovery than this was that of a hairy larva, evidently an *Arctian*, and unlike anything I have ever seen. Knowing how very few of this group are found on the mountain I hoped that the larva might be that of the fine moth, *Platarctia parthenos*, but Dr. Packard tells me it is not that, and he cannot yet identify it. The larva of *Laria rossii* has been described, and is quite unlike this. It was found crawling on a rock in the Alpine Garden. Not knowing its food-plant I gathered leaves from all the plants and small shrubs near by and gave the caterpillar its choice. It at once selected the mountain bilberry, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, and ate greedily; after bringing it home I tried other species of *Vaccinium*, but it would eat none of them. Then I tried other plants, plantain, dandelion, lettuce, cabbage, but with no success. Later it ate sparingly of poplar and white birch. I have handed over this interesting larva to Dr. Packard, who will describe and have drawings made of it, and then try to carry it through its transformations, so I will not speak of it in detail here. This is no place for a meteorological article, so will not dwell upon the terrible storm of August 24th. It has already become a matter of history. Those of us who watched through the hours of that long night of wild tumult and tempest will not soon forget the experience. There was no collecting that day,

and on the next, when the storm was subsiding, I came down the mountain. I expect to print a complete list of the insects captured during my two visits to the Summit. They have been identified by Mr. Liebeck, Mr. W. J. Fox, Mr. G. C. Davis, Mr. Van Duzee and others. And I am deeply indebted to them all for their assistance. The heaviest burden has devolved upon Mr. Liebeck, as the number of Coleoptera far exceeded that of any other order, amounting to about one hundred and twenty species.



Observations on the Hymenopterous Genus *Neolarra* Ashm.

By WILLIAM J. FOX.

In the Bulletin of the Colorado Biological Association, No. 1, 1890, p. 8, Mr. William H. Ashmead has described an interesting new genus of the Fossorial Hymenoptera. Through the kindness of the above-mentioned gentleman I have had the opportunity of examining the unique type, from which I have made the observations contained herein and have drawn up the appended description. I quite agree with Mr. Ashmead in stating that it will probably form a distinct tribe of the Bembecidæ (so-called), and go further and believe it to represent a distinct group intermediate between the so-called Bembecidæ and Larridæ. As several authors have demonstrated that the Larridæ and Bembecidæ are not entitled to family distinction, representing nothing but groups of the Sphecidæ, the discovery of *Neolarra* tends to make the assertion stronger. While its affinities to the Bembecites are shown in the strongly protruding labrum and form of the mandibles, yet its relation to the Larrites is evident in the wings, which are not very dissimilar to the genus *Dinetus*. I might state that the type is a ♂, and not a ♀, as supposed by Mr. Ashmead.

Description.—Head as broad as the thorax; mandibles broad at base, narrow and acute at apex, not emarginate on outer margin; labrum triangular, a little broader at base than it is long; the clypeus seems to be divided into three lobes, the middle one being by far the largest, most prominent, and extends up between the insertion of antennæ; eyes rather strongly diverging towards the vertex, their inner margin entire; antennæ short, the pedicel